



# Smithsonian

*Archives of American Art*

## A Finding Aid to the Winslow Homer Collection, 1863, 1877-1945, in the Archives of American Art

Erin Corley

Funding for the re-processing and digitization of this collection  
was provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art

September 14, 2005

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art
<b>Title:</b>	Winslow Homer collection
<b>Date:</b>	1863 1877-1945
<b>Identifier:</b>	AAA.homewinl
<b>Creator:</b>	Homer, Winslow, 1836-1910
<b>Extent:</b>	0.2 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	The Winslow Homer collection measures 0.2 linear feet with material from 1863 and 1877 to 1945. The collection documents Homer's career as a painter and lithographer through letters, printed material, family records, and photographs.

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## Administrative Information

### Provenance

Items in this collection are gifts of various donors. The exhibition catalog was donated by Lawrence Fleischman in 1954, the photographs donated by Dorothy Adlow in 1961, and the Marie Blanchard letters and news clipping donated by Carlotta Clafin in 1976. Other letters were donated by Charles Feinberg in 1959, Joyce Tyler in 1979, Lawrence Fleischman in 1959, Jean Meissner and William T. Campbell in 1966, Katherine H. Coudon in 1989, and Edgar Salinger in 1961. The bible pages were a 1977 anonymous donation. Items were microfilmed shortly after receipt.

### Related Material

Also found in the Archives of American Art are the Winslow Homer letters to M. Knoedler & Company, 1900-1904.

### Alternative Forms Available

The papers of painter **Winslow Homer** were digitized in 2005 by the Archives of American Art, and total 196 images.

### Processing Information

The collection was received in a series of accessions and typically microfilmed at some point after receipt on reels D24, 2814, 3483, 4281, and 1817. The entire collection was fully processed, arranged, and described by Erin Corley and scanned in 2005, with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

### Preferred Citation

Winslow Homer collection, 1863, 1877-1945. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

## Restrictions on Access

The collection has been digitized and is available online via AAA's website.

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## Biographical Note

Winslow Homer was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1836. He was raised in Cambridge, where he developed a love of art and the outdoors. At the age of 19 he began his career as an illustrator, apprenticing at the J.H. Bufford lithographic firm in Boston. He then decided to become a freelance illustrator. In 1859 Homer moved to New York to work for *Harper's Weekly*, serving as artist-correspondent for the magazine during the Civil War. After taking some art classes at the National Academy of Design, he decided to focus on oil painting. He quickly gained international recognition as a painter, and in 1866 made his first trip to Europe. In 1873 he decided to work in watercolor and found great success in his experimentation with light and color in this medium. In the mid-1880s Homer moved permanently to Prout's Neck, Maine, an isolated area where he built a studio and focused his paintings on man's struggle with nature. Also during the 1880s he worked on a series of etchings based on his paintings. Homer continued to paint for the next twenty years, vacationing summers in places such as the Adirondacks and the Bahamas to capture varied landscapes, until his death in 1910.

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## Scope and Content Note

The Winslow Homer collection measures 0.2 linear feet with material that dates from 1863 and 1877 to 1945. The collection documents Homer's career as a painter and lithographer through letters, printed material, family records, and photographs.

Letters in the collection primarily document Homer's later career between 1890 and 1909. Included are an illustrated letter to the art collector George G. Briggs concerning frames, and twenty-six letters to art collector and friend, Thomas B. Clarke, discussing Homer's artwork, exhibitions, sale of his work, and his family. Many of the Clarke letters are transcribed. Also found are twelve letters to Louis Prang, a friend and successful chromolithographer, concerning Homer's drawing techniques and making drawings for Prang's use. Miscellaneous letters include a letter to cellist Emil Salinger, art editor Florence Fuller, and others, discussing his artwork. Marie "Midie" W. Blanchard was Homer's cousin and the folder of her letters includes a letter from Homer to her, and two letters from her to others about Homer.

This collection also contains photograph copies of four pages from the "Family Record" in the Homer family Bible, which records births, deaths, marriages, and locations of family members. The "Century Loan Exhibition" catalog is annotated throughout with notes regarding the exhibition and contains an introduction by Booth Tarkington. Also found is a newspaper clipping about Homer's artwork. Photographs include twenty albumen and cyanotype photographs, on two pages from a photo album, of Winslow Homer and family in various activities.

## Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection, items are categorized into one series consisting of twelve folders. Items are arranged chronologically within each folder.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Art -- Collectors and collecting  
Painting, American

Names:

Clarke, Thomas B. (Thomas Benedict), 1848-1931  
Prang, Louis, 1824-1909  
Salinger, Emil

Occupations:

Painters -- Maine

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: Winslow Homer Collection, 1863, 1877-1945, undated

#### 12 Folders (Box 1)

Box 1, Folder 1	<a href="#">Letter to George G. Briggs, 1896</a>
Box 1, Folder 2	<a href="#">Letters to Thomas B. Clarke, 1890-1896</a>
Box 1, Folder 3	<a href="#">Letters to Thomas B. Clarke, 1897-1898</a>
Box 1, Folder 4	<a href="#">Letters to Thomas B. Clarke, 1900-1901</a>
Box 1, Folder 5	<a href="#">Letters to Louis Prang, 1863, 1893, undated</a>
Box 1, Folder 6	<a href="#">Letters to Louis Prang, 1895-1905</a>
Box 1, Folder 7	<a href="#">Letters, Miscellaneous, 1877, 1890-1909, undated</a> Notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To G. W. H. Ritchie, November 2</li><li>• To "Mattie", November 29</li><li>• To Emil Salinger, November 26, 1877</li><li>• To "Madam", May 21, 1890</li><li>• To Mr. Bryant, December 28, 1892</li><li>• To Richard and Co., December 14, 1893</li><li>• To T. H. Allen, February 18, 1897</li><li>• From Whittemore Brothers, May 6, 1897</li><li>• To Florence S. Fuller, December 9, 1900</li><li>• To "My dear old friend", October 18, 1905</li><li>• To William Howe Downes, September 8, 1909</li></ul>
Box 1, Folder 8	<a href="#">Marie W. Blanchard letters, 1883, 1891, undated</a>
Box 1, Folder 9	<a href="#">Homer Family Bible pages, undated</a>
Box 1, Folder 10	<a href="#">Exhibition Catalog, "Century Loan Exhibition as a Memorial to Winslow Homer", Prout's Neck Association, 1936</a>
Box 1, Folder 11	<a href="#">Newspaper Clipping, 1945</a>
Box 1, Folder 12	<a href="#">Photographs, undated</a>

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